Dan Groth/Arnstein suicide (Playboy)/Sherman Skolnick HW 2/12/75

Late last night, just before I was going to bed, there was a phone call from a man identifying himself as Blake Fleetwood, doing a story for New Times. The nature of the story I guessed after we talked for a while, on the Arnstein suicide and Dan Groth's possible part in it.

I gathered Fleetwoods was not from Chicago. He had done some preliminary checking, carefully enough to have the old records on one Dan Groth handling property stolen in a robbery that ended in murder.

He appears to have heard of me more than from Bud, who he indicated had referred him and on the Wolden matter. We discussed this first and I told him what I believe, the areas of doubt and what is not known. This led to Skolnick, who told him I had given him the Vallee stuff. We then discussed that and I told him what I think of it and of Skolnick and of the consequences of Skolnick's misuse. We agreed that whether or not he is crazy, what Skolnick does fits Department of Disinformation perfectly.

I did refer him to Finley by several mentions of Larry's name. He did not know LF.

I added effects of D. Hunt manufactures.

He says he'll probably be in touch again.

As of now he seems satisfied that the case against Arnstein was a frame to give a means of leaning on Heffner and Playboy and probably from those who dislike what he or the magazine or the foundation do. Fleetwood thinks it was DEA. I told him of Anderson columns, of which he had some knowledge, and of the Conein interest in devices for assassination, of which he did not know.

While he seemed to know much about the Groth- even that he had spoken to the papers first on Arnstein's death - he made no mention of the Fred Hampton case.

Felt I should alert Finley and phoned him. He had a call from Skolnick yesterday. S. told him that a "major" and "national" publication was coming out with a story that Groth was one of the Chicago CIA cops, inference either took their training, works for them or both.

Larry thinks that rather than this originating with Fleetwood it is something he picked up from Skolnick, who has said it in the past, including on radion in Boston.

Larry was not working last Friday, 2/9, when Dick Gregory had his second or third or ? press conference on this in Chicago because he feels he has more influence with the press there. Gregory was in the CDN office and in Larry's absence spoke to a young reporter named Brown. Brown covered the conference and turned in a three-page memo, impressed by it. The new stuff includes the allegation that Martinez and LHO were together in New Orleans. I'd heard of this from Robert of Policoff and warned them that it was a crazy misrepresentation of WDSu footage I have. (It is not impossible that Robert "borrowed" this without my o.k. and co[illegible] [illegible] specific and certain! I told Walter to please try to tell Dick that if this were one of the more proficient Department of Disinformation operations it could not be more perfect in pursuit of this ends. Or in time of greater need.

Walter says that in his joint appearance with Jack Anderson on WNET-TV, NYC, last night, Gregory avoided this kind of foolishness and went into CIA foreign operations, esp. VN, Chile, etc. Policoff is to have taped that show for me.